

From time to time, a few friends and I run off to the mountains to do a little backpacking. We always have a most interesting time! On one such trip one fall a few years ago, we decided to change our plans midway through our 3 day trip and stop at a shelter for the night that we had not reserved. I remember distinctly some one of the group, who I am sure would prefer to remain nameless, making the statement that there was no way that the shelter would fill up at that time of year, so everything would be all right. And it was, until nearly dark when it became obvious that we would not have a place to sleep for the night! Now I knew what Joseph and Mary once felt after traveling all day and finding no room at the inn. There was nothing for us to do but to go ahead and walk out. At night, with no moon, and penlight flashlights. We were certainly walking by faith. After midnight we reached the campground where our car was parked, and one short hour later we found it and were off to find a motel room. Due to fact that this was the last weekend of the Knoxville World's Fair, and the weekend of the Alabama - Tennessee game. So after searching high and low for a motel room, we finally found one near Knoxville at about 3 AM. We would have taken a good manger by then. Finally, though, we were comfortably resting.

I brought up the instance where Jesus, through his parents, was searching for a place to stay. When you think about it, his whole life was one of searching for place in the hearts of his the world. Someone has said that there wasn't room for Christ at the inn; the only place that the world had room for him was on the cross. Fortunately, the cross could not hold him, and he rose again. But he is still searching for a place in our hearts. And the funny thing is, that he is searching to give us peace and comfort, instead of the other way around!

The question is, do we have room for Jesus? Do we have a place prepared for him? Remember the widow who prepared a special room for the prophet Elisha? We must do the same in our hearts for Christ.

My parents gave me a filing cabinet for my birthday, and it is really nice. I can put so many things away in an orderly manner if I just know how. I have this stack of things that I don't know what to do with, that there is no good place I know of to put them. I just move them around from cubbyhole to corner, until I need something underneath them, and they are moved again. They are always in my way, but every time I try to classify them, I put them up again. Our feelings towards Christ are sometimes just like this. We don't know what to do with him, really, so we just move him from place to place until we can make a decision about him. He keeps getting in our way, and we try to deal with him briefly and put him somewhere else until later. But he continually pops into our lives at every turn. It is sort of like a loose object in the trunk; it annoys us so that we either put it in its place or we throw it out.

We must decide what to do with Christ. We must quit ignoring him, putting him off for later. He needs to be firmly placed in our lives, in our hearts. We must prepare room for him. He had promised to do so for us in heaven, so let us make the decision now and receive the comfort that only he can give. Let him into your hearts tonight as we stand and sing this song...